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### THE CURRENT COMMUNIST PROPOSAL ON POW'S

The current Communist proposal for settling the POW issue does not alter the Communist position on the critical point of the fate of prisoners who remain unwilling to return after Communist "explanations" to them.

The Communists were expected to name India as the neutral state for custody of the unwilling, and in effect have done so by proposing a five-nation commission of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and India.

The Communists were also expected to withdraw their demand for the physical transfer of the unwilling to the territory of the neutral state, once assured that a friendly state, or a preponderantly friendly committee, would remove the prisoners from UN influence during the period of "explanations." The current proposal apparently envisages that the five-nation commission will operate in Korea.

Finally, the Communists were expected to compromise on a period of four months for "explanations" -- a period midway between the original UN proposal of two months and the original Communist proposal of six months.

The Communists were not expected to accept the principle of voluntary repatriation, and they have not done so. They continue to propose that the disposition of prisoners who remain unwilling to return be determined by a political conference. The draft armistice agreement calls for such a conference within three months of an armistice.

Should the UN reject this proposal, the Communists might eventually accept an alternative proposal for disposition by the five-nation commission, rather than by the political conference, of prisoners who remain unwilling to return.

Beyond this possible alternative, it is doubtful that the Communists are now prepared to compromise. Recession of the talks might lead to a further compromise, but there is still no evidence that the Communists will accept any arrangement which would ultimately cost them a substantial number of prisoners.

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